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As presently conceived and implemented, some compensatory education programs appear to be intellectually, democratically, professionally, and philosophically unsound. Some program administrators seem not to have considered the possibility that their programs amount to an imposition of a middle-class value system upon a group of people who have many positive values and strengths not in need of "rehabilitation." These "deprived" citizens are often not consulted about practices relevant to their own rehabilitation. Moreover, many programs to train teachers for work with deprived students provide their participants no direct contact with the realities of poverty. Finally, some projects for the culturally deprived treat the symptoms or results of deprivation rather than remedying the social and environmental conditions from which this deprivation has stemmed. (LB)

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I. CULTURAL DEPRIVATION—

A Few Questions

By ERNEST H. AUSTIN, JR.

AT a recent meeting of educational leaders, I had this awesome statistic thrown at me several times: By 1970 one out of every two children in our public schools will be culturally deprived or disadvantaged. The current emphasis upon institutes and projects which have been and are being developed at several major universities serves as evidence for this point. Many of these programs follow in the wake of school desegregation. As an aside, I would like to point out the confusion in our thinking which allows us to take advantage of the racial situation in order to do a job which we should have been doing all along.

I have no wish to question or malign the intent of those who support such programs, but I would like to point out some inconsistencies, dangers, and deficiencies which may burden any such project. I contend, specifically, that such undertakings generally are: 1) intellectually unsound; 2) likely to be authoritarian; 3) often directed by incompetents; 4) philosophically indefensible in themselves.

Lack of intellectual soundness. I am inclined to view many of the programs and projects for the culturally deprived as another hula-hoop phase in which parlor liberals gain publicity for their beneficent undertakings. I am questioning, basically, whether these people have an intellectualized commitment to such programs, or whether the programs just happen to be their momentary effort at charity. It is tempting to equate most projects for the culturally deprived with the types of movements that come at Christmastime: primarily visceral as opposed to rational. It is "good" to give food baskets to the needy, and because "good" is intended no one need be overly concerned with the possible consequences of such action. But a child acclimated to a diet of semi-starvation can become deathly ill on a rich feast. His pride may also be injured. And, no doubt, he can, as some claim, become habituated to a dependence upon someone or some institution. The point I am trying to make is that without an intellectual commitment programs of aid are haphazard and often destructive of the goals to be attained. A grounded and warranted intellectual commitment as well as an emotional attachment is needed in projects for the deprived. This is saying, primarily, that little investigation of evidence is apparent while less than rigorous attention is given to the examination of existing presuppositions held by those involved in programs for the deprived. Also, there seems to be very little time and effort devoted to an examination of possible logical implications following from such projects.

In support of this assertion, I will attempt to show that there is a lack of discrimination in many of these programs of rehabilitation. Early research seems to indicate that there are many positive aspects stemming from cultural deprivation. The question "Do we want these positive characteristics and can we save them while destroying the negative influences?" is seldom asked. From what is the child to be rehabilitated? And to what? Before these value questions can be answered, we must first define what we mean by "culturally deprived." And it is here that a major problem arises, a problem often overlooked by many programs. Too often we consider "cultural deprivation" and "cultural difference" to be synonymous when in reality there is no deprivation, only difference. This means that "rehabilitation" is not a proper word to use, for it implies that a set of values is wrong when the values are only different. The problem, then, is not to minimize or maximize any particular values but to stress the questioning and re-evaluation of *all* values. It is factually possible to do this even if

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it is psychologically difficult. For example, let me employ two usually accepted generalizations:

Most of our middle-class citizens design their lives on the basis of the future to such an extent that they are bored and dissatisfied with the present. Life is to come. On the other hand, our lower-class citizens concentrate upon the present and neglect the future. Life is in the now.

Here are two "different" values, and we can guarantee that problems will arise from either of them. Should we attempt to stamp out one, or should we question both? If we do the latter, I hypothesize we will find "deprivation" to be a two-way affair. That is, both values are somehow lacking because one class of citizens has been deprived of interaction and communication with another class of citizens. Help for the deprived then becomes a process of reciprocity: each has something to give and something to be taken away. Each class is in a sense both rich and deprived. Each has something to share and something to put aside, something to learn and something to unlearn.

I contend that very few programs take this approach. Help is usually a one-sided process with one class "giving" and the other (primarily minority groups) "getting," which normally means a transfer from one set of problems or deprivations to another set. This happens because most programs are not intellectually grounded. Rather, they are benevolent attempts to impose a particular value system upon a particular group of people. This normal procedure leads into the next point.

Dangers to democratic operation. Keeping in mind that the culturally deprived are usually taken to be members of a particular minority group, one wonders how often they themselves are consulted about the matter of their rehabilitation. We in education somehow seem to have decided that it is best to rehabilitate such children. But it seems we have reached this conclusion without much consultation with other interest groups and institutions. Worse, there seems to be little concern whether the culturally deprived enjoy some aspects of deprivation, or whether they wish to be rehabilitated. And even if they so choose, how often are they asked to take part in the determination of policies and direction of such rehabilitation? To the extent that their views, arrived at in an informed way, are not elicited and considered, then to that extent programs for the deprived are undemocratic. If the previous description of such programs is reasonably accurate, then most attempts to aid the deprived are good examples of how *not* to be democratic.

Incompetency in implementation. An adequate investigation, I hypothesize, would show that most programs are attempting to educate teachers to work with the culturally deprived through professors, guest lecturers, etc., who themselves have little understanding of the problem because they have never gotten their hands dirty. That is, they have neither been deprived nor have they studied a deprived situation. In such cases, they lack the needed credentials. Perhaps they are theoretically qualified, but without the aid of competent social workers their understanding of the real situation is greatly lessened. A competent social worker knows what an arrest sheet looks like, has personally felt the effects of rampant delinquency, has studied and lived in slum areas where *de facto* segregation is the rule, has firsthand evidence of the ravages of illiteracy, prejudice, venereal disease, and unemployment. He has some understanding of the frustration, loneliness, inadequacy, and violence that such conditions can lead to. To the extent that this knowledge is not employed, then to that extent the possibility of any program's success is also lessened.

Philosophically indefensible. This is the major accusation. It is implicit in the points already discussed, but it can be explicitly stated. Even if aid to the deprived is taken to be a dual affair in which all involved both gain and lose something, even if the programs are intellectually valid, even if values are shared and reshaped, even if the programs personify democracy in action, and even if all personnel involved are competent—there will still be no successful programs until one other matter is cleared up.

Most projects for the culturally deprived are designed to alleviate results, effects, and consequences. Seldom are plans suggested for the *prevention* of deprivation. That is, most projects are set up to cure the ills or symptoms arising from deprivation, while few have been directed toward identifying and overcoming the causes of deprivation itself. This is a deadly indictment, for it is a judgment of hypocrisy, recognized or not. The statement that opened this paper demonstrates how we cite statistics as unchanging and unchangeable natural law. But the statistical statement that by 1970 one child out of two in our schools will be culturally deprived is a proposition of probability based upon conditions prevailing at this time. That is, the proposition is not logically necessary if steps can be taken to alter the conditions which now breed deprivation. In truth, it is logically if not factually possible that *no* child will be culturally deprived by 1970.

Schools are basically places in which children learn. But there are social conditions which stand as impediments to learning. A poorly clothed and ill-fed child who is cold and hungry is not likely to learn a great deal, except perhaps a lifelong bitterness toward his society. Most programs for the culturally deprived employ escape clauses which allow them to be both modern and conservative at the same time. They bow to intelligently directed social change, then evade the very large philosophic issue by conveniently forgetting it.

The argument employed by these reluctant reformers runs something like this: "While the school does not have the responsibility to see that children are properly fed and clothed, teachers do recognize that a hungry and cold child is in no condition to learn. And while teachers realize that the school cannot do everything to eliminate cultural deprivation, it must do what it can to *promote* the conditions for learning as well as learning itself."

This is an almost perfect evasion. The schools do not have the responsibility and teachers don't get into trouble by attempting to pin down where the responsibility lies. They can even ignore the question whether anyone has responsibility. One can only guess that the word "promote" signifies lack of intellectual commitment and recognition of the wavering of philosophic position. One also senses the hope that, as at Christmas, small charitable acts will fortify and soothe the conscience to the extent that poverty and deprivation can be neglected for another year. This neglect is the bitter tang of sweet charity, whether it be after Christmas or after school.

From this point of view education is to become both pathological and the protector of entrenched vested interests. Education is pathological when those directing it do not believe that it is necessary for curricular changes to be followed by changes in the surrounding socio-environmental conditions. To feed a child in school, to adjust his, his teacher's, and his peers' attitudes or self-concepts to reach a harmonious interaction—and then to send him back into the larger social context where these characteristics are not effective—this is to build a pathological personality by withdrawing the child from reality for a part of the day. Social confusion is not simply in us. It is also "out there" in an existent situation. And to adjust attitudes without a corresponding adjustment and support "out there" is simply to brainwash. Education deals with three elements: the child, the teacher, and the social environment beyond the school. It is this third element which at

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the present time needs equal consideration, but which is generally neglected in programs for the deprived.

An educational attempt of this sort also serves to protect and foster the power of vested interests in that the school *accepts* surrounding conditions without investigation and criticism, and thus encourages its students to do the same. A school which uncritically designs its program to deal with the culturally deprived is, in essence, stamping its approval upon the conditions which breed such deprivation. I would like to put forth a possible counter-argument here. It could be said, following the statement just made, that the medical profession, by orienting many of its facilities toward the cure of cancer, also gives approval to the conditions which foster the disease. This would be true *if* no evidence in the form of preventive research could be found. This, fortunately, is not the case. An outbreak of malaria would not only set medical machinery in motion to aid the victims but would also stimulate medical and other authorities to seek out and destroy the source which feeds the disease. Unfortunately, education has yet to become so professionalized, just as it has yet to develop adequate methods of inquiry. Educators cannot honestly evade the question of the source of deprivation by resorting to areas of specialization and divisions of labor any more than a specialist in lung cancer can honestly evade the source of the disease. Millions of dollars are spent in efforts both to cure and prevent cancer and other diseases, yet we live in a nation in which, so the experts say, there should be no poverty. Still, millions are being spent to rectify the *results* of poverty while very little is allocated to determine ways by which poverty can be prevented. This does not speak well of us as an intelligent people.

Many educational proposals directed toward cultural deprivation demonstrate that we are victims of our concepts of what education ought to be and what schools ought to do. Unfortunately, the concepts were formulated from our experience in the schools of yesterdays long since past, and their hold is tenacious. For a long while in our history various groups thrived upon the need for social reform. Most of the plans were visionary and utopian, completely unrelated to existing realities. What these reformers thought (or, rather, felt) "ought to be" was formulated without regard to what "could be." Because of this and other factors, educators are timid about postulating "oughts" which would entail social reform. That they are most willing to engage in educational experimentation and reform only serves to point out their weakness of position. They seem to feel that the only institution that has to be modified is the educational system, never an institution that is political or economic, never the family or our religious structure. These are taboo, untouchable even to reformers. If there are social problems, then all that needs to be done is to have our accommodating educational system make a few magical changes in curriculum and methods, for this will solve the problem of, say, cultural deprivation. One can, of course, make a strong case for this position: The schools are relatively safe places in which to hide.

The negative tone of this article should not be taken to mean that I am opposed to programs which aid the culturally deprived. I am only opposed to indefensible programs. The reader has a right to demand that I cease being solely critical and postulate some "better" solutions. Such solutions can be inferred from what has been said previously, but there is no "the" solution, for these are things which have to be worked out. This "working out" is the essential meaning of democracy. It implies that we can accept the risk involved and develop methods for solving such problems. But—and this is crucial—no attempt to develop such methods will be undertaken until there is a recognition that these problems exist and that they are important. Such an awareness would demonstrate that education can no longer isolate itself from its social context. Teachers would have to acknowledge that it is unfair to educate a Negro boy for a profession generally open only to white men or to educate a Negro girl for a career in cosmetology without *at least* explaining that one occupation is nearly useless and that the other is an extension of an invidious system.

If this article can draw from educators an intellectual and philosophical acknowledgement that changes must be made not only in our educational system but also in the wider social context, then it will have served admirably well, for it is from here that we must start.

I have been advised that this article, because of its attack, is likely to alienate the very persons who are most likely to agree with what has been said and aid those who are opposed to programs for the culturally deprived by furnishing them with ammunition. A professional approach will prevent alienation, and adequate programs will remove any targets for the ammunition which has been provided.

II. Compensatory Education—Some Answers for a Skeptic

By JAMES W. GUTHRIE and JAMES A. KELLY

PROFESSOR Austin's critical attack upon programs aimed at the rehabilitation of culturally deprived children—compensatory education—is nowhere so logically organized or empirically supported as his four-pronged introductory accusation would lead one to expect. Consequently, it is not possible to refute a number of his unsupported, indeed unsupportable, charges. What follows, therefore, is an attempt to restore Professor Austin's major derailments to a more accurate track, to analyze the need and justification for compensatory education, and further, to suggest some promising program directions.

The first criticism, "lack of intellectual soundness," is itself somewhat lacking in focus, but it appears to impugn both the intellectual ability and

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